



USS *Uniontown*, PF-65

A city in Fayette County in southwestern Pennsylvania which was settled about 1767, incorporated as a borough in 1796, and as a city in 1916. Fort Necessity, the site of George Washington's first "command" during the French and Indian War, is situated near Uniontown and General Braddock's grave is also nearby. The city is also the birthplace of Generals George C. Marshall and Henry H. "Hap" Arnold.

Builder: Leathem D. Smith Shipbuilding Co., Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.

Length: 303' 11"

Beam: 37' 6"

Draft: 12' 8" fl

Displacement: 2,230 tons

Propulsion: 2-shaft VTE, 3 boilers

Range: 9,500 nm at 12 knots

Top speed: 20 knots

Complement: 190

Armament: 3 x 3"/50; 4 x 40mm (2x2); 9 x 20mm; 1 x Hedgehog, 8 x depth charge projectors; 2 x depth charge racks. For those frigates fitted out for weather patrol duty, the after 3-inch gun was removed and a weather balloon hanger was added aft.

History:

Uniontown (PF-65) was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 1489) as *Chattanooga* on 21 April 1943 at Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin by the Leathem D. Smith Shipbuilding Co. She was launched on 7 August 1943 and

was sponsored by Mrs. Cecilia Daniel. She was then brought to New Orleans for completion on 4 April 1944 where she was renamed *Uniontown* on 16 August 1944 to free the name *Chattanooga* for CL-118. She was commissioned on 6 October 1944 under the command of CDR Richard E. Morell, USCG.

Following shakedown in the Caribbean and a brief visit to Charleston, *Uniontown* joined Task Force 61 at Hampton Roads on 27 December 1944 for duty as a convoy escort. Two days later, the Coast Guard-manned escort vessel got underway for the first of three round-trip voyages across the Atlantic, escorting convoys to Oran, Algeria, and back. Her first round trip lasted from 29 December 1944 to 11 February 1945; the second round trip commenced on 15 March and ended with the ship's return to New York on 9 April. On 23 April, *Uniontown* got underway for North Africa and her last wartime convoy escort run.

While en route to Algeria, *Union town* received word that German forces had surrendered at Rheims on 7 May, ending the long European war. Arriving at Oran on the 18th, *Uniontown* soon got underway for the United States and reached Philadelphia on 8 June for conversion to a weather ship. On 3 July, outfitted for weather patrol duties, she set out for Newfoundland and arrived at Argentia two days later.

On 13 July, *Uniontown* commenced operations at Weather Station No. 3 and remained on station until 2 August. The ship returned to Grondal, Greenland, from 3 to 20 August in between deployments on weather patrol. The frigate served on Weather Station No. 1 from 22 August to 11 September and subsequently at Weather Station No. 3 from 2 to 20 October before she returned to the Boston Navy Yard. A month later, *Uniontown* headed for Hampton Roads and arrived at Norfolk on 30 November 1945.

On 20 December 1945, the warship was decommissioned at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Norfolk, and was struck from the Navy list on 8 January 1946. She was then sold to the Argentine government in July 1947, in whose service she was renamed *Sarandi*.

Sources:

The Coast Guard At War, Transports and Escorts, Vol. V, No. 1.

Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships, 1922-1946. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1992, pp. 148-149.

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. VII, p. 84.

